



**US Army Corps
of Engineers®**

Buffalo District

www.lrb.usace.army.mil

NEWS RELEASE

Release No. 07-10

CONTACT: Bruce I. Sanders, Public Affairs Office
716.879.4410 (office) 716.481.5439 (cell)
Bruce.I.Sanders@usace.army.mil

April 10, 2007

Corps of Engineers Announces Black Rock Lock Schedule

BUFFALO, NY— The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Buffalo District has set the Black Rock Lock operating schedule for the 2007 navigation season as shown below:

- Through 28 April 2007 8 a.m. to 4 p.m., Monday through Friday
- 29 April through 26 May 2007 8 a.m. to 4 p.m., 7 days a week
- 27 May through 29 September 2007 8 a.m. to 10 p.m., Monday through Friday
10 a.m. to 10 p.m., Saturday and Sunday
- 30 September to 17 November 2007 8 a.m. to 4 p.m., 7 days a week
- 18 November to 31 December 2007 8 a.m. to 4 p.m., Monday through Friday

Commercial traffic will be accommodated on a 24-hour basis with prior notification.

Questions on operations may be directed to the Black Rock Lock during scheduled operating hours by calling: (716) 879-4403, or to the New York/Pennsylvania Operations and Maintenance Office between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. at: (716) 879-4206. The Lock may also be contacted on marine radio. Operations monitors channel 16 (working channel 12).

Tug and barge operators are reminded that Personal Floatation Devices are required for all barge personnel during the approach and while transiting the Lock.

The Black Rock Channel extends from Buffalo Harbor to the Black Rock Lock, and is 3 ½ miles long. The federal navigation channel has a minimum width of 200 feet throughout its length. Pleasure craft are required to yield the right-of-way to commercial vessels due to the confined waters of the channel.

The Black Rock Lock and the Black Rock Channel, located where Lake Erie drains into the Niagara River, allow all types ships a protected waterway around the reefs, rapids and fast currents that exist in the upstream portion of the Niagara River. The lock and channel permit pleasure craft and commercial vessels to travel between Buffalo Harbor and Tonawanda Harbor. In combination with the New York Erie Canal, they provide pleasure craft and canal-draft vessels an inland water route between Lake Erie and the Atlantic Ocean. Branch canals in the New York State canal system also provide boaters access to Lake Erie and to the Lake Champlain.

There has been a lock at Black Rock since 1833, when New York State built one as part of the Erie Canal system. The present lock, constructed by the Corps of Engineers from 1908-1913, provides the capability to accommodate large Great Lakes vessels. Through the years those vessels have carried commodities essential to business and industry in Western New York. Although a once-important traffic in iron ore has disappeared, a substantial amount of coal and petroleum is still transported through the lock.

In 1975, the first major rehabilitation of the lock was completed. In 1982, a concrete resurfacing and widening project was completed. Additional work was constructed between 1984-1986 involving major rehabilitation of the guard gates and the operating system. In 1991-1992, cavities between the lock's concrete monoliths and the bedrock were filled with high pressure cement grout to stabilize the foundation.

-30-

For additional information about the United States Army Corps of Engineers, please visit our Website at www.usace.army.mil.